

H O N O R S

INFORMATION FOR INTERESTED JUNIORS AND SENIORS

The 2009 - 2010 Honors Committee consists of the following faculty members**:

Seminar Group	Group Leader	Phone	E-mail
Animal Physiology	Professor Ellis Loew	3-3484	erl1
Biochemistry	Professor George Hess	5-4809	gph2
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	Professor Kelly Zamudio	4-4212	krz2
Genetics and Development	TBA		
Microbiology	Professor James Shapleigh	5-8535	jps2
Molecular and Cell Biology	Professor William Brown	5-2444	wjb5
Natural Resources	Professor Joseph Yavitt	5-6601	jby1
Neurobiology & Behavior	Professor Christiane Linster	4-4331	cl243
Plant Biology	Professor Thomas Owens	5-8516	tgo2
Director, Office of Undergraduate Biology	Professor Jeff Doyle, ex officio	5-5233	jjd5
Honors Coordinator	Laurel Southard	4-4533	les3

** Additional faculty may be added to the committee at the beginning of the academic year.

For more information on the Honors Program, please come to 216 Stimson Hall or call 5-8246.

Admission to the Honors Program

For admission to the Biological Sciences Honors Program, students must:

- have completed at least 30 credits at Cornell
- have been accepted into the biological sciences major
- be enrolled as first-semester senior
- have an overall Cornell cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.0
- have a Cornell cumulative grade-point average in all biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics courses of at least 3.0.

Students must maintain the 3.0 Cornell cumulative grade-point average through graduation and complete all requirements for the major in biological sciences in order to graduate with honors.

Application Part #2 Requirements:

- Applicants must have applied (part#1) during their Junior year. (*Students who did not apply must submit a Petition.)
- Applicants must be graduating in January or May 2010
- Transcript (with grades from Spring 2009 included)
- Application must include a detailed 1-2 page description of Honors Research project
- Applicants must have attended a 2009 Honors Seminar Presentation. *(Petitions- see Pam Davis, 216 Stimson Hall)

Applications for admission are available in 216 Stimson Hall and on Biology's web page www.biology.cornell.edu Deadline for application materials is 12:00 noon, Friday, September 11, 2009 in 216 Stimson Hall.

P R O G R A M

Program Requirements

Students are responsible for participating in their Honors Seminar Group as determined by the group leader. Students will report on their research projects in two oral presentations and in an honors thesis, which will be evaluated by your thesis advisor, two other faculty members, the Honors Group leader and the Honors Committee.

The Honors Thesis Advisor:

Students must work with a current Cornell faculty member who agrees to oversee the honors research. Students may work with any faculty member on campus as long as the content of the project is biological in nature. The Honors Committee will evaluate all applications for biological content. Thesis advisors should not be on sabbatical leave in the spring of the year.

The Honors Program Committee has prepared an information sheet and set of guidelines for the thesis advisor. It is the student's responsibility to see that the prospective supervisor has received this information prior to signing the student's application to the Honors Program. The research advisor must suggest the name of at least one additional faculty member that would be an appropriate evaluator of the student's thesis.

Honors Group Seminars:

Accepted students will be assigned to the Honors Seminar Group that is the best fit for the content of their project. Each seminar group will meet during each semester together with the appropriate faculty member or members from the Committee. The group will meet enough times so that each student can present a seminar each semester. In the fall, the student will informally describe the nature of his or her project and the relevant technical procedures. In the spring, he or she will present the results of all the conclusions that can be drawn from the research. All students in the seminar groups must attend these sectional seminars, and active participation in terms of questions and/or comments is expected. Students who do not present and attend seminars will not graduate with honors. The Seminar Group Leader will inform students of the time and place of these meetings.

The Thesis:

The thesis should be written in the form of a research report in a leading journal in the disciplinary area of research. The Honors Group Leaders will suggest a journal style that is appropriate to the discipline. In general, the thesis should consist of a short introduction, relevant materials and methods, a concise presentation of the meaningful data, and a discussion of the conclusions that does not delve into inappropriate speculation. Generally, the thesis should not exceed 20 typewritten pages, double-spaced, but not include figures and tables. The student should seek the guidance of his or her thesis advisor and should conduct a thorough literature search on the topic. While an extensive literature review should not be included in the thesis, we expect the student to indicate in the discussion and conclusion parts of the thesis that he or she is fully aware of how the results and findings contribute to the scientific status of the problem. Although the thesis advisor must decide if the student's results are of a sufficient amount in quality or reliability to justify their presentation in an honors thesis, the ultimate responsibility for the thesis is the student's. Examples of previous honors theses are available in the Quiet Study Room of the Bio Center (216 Stimson Hall) and in Mann Library.

A majority vote of the Honors Committee that the thesis is acceptable is necessary for the recommendation that the student graduate with honors, and for the level of honors awarded.

Deadlines

1. Application Part #2 for Admission: Part#2 of the application for admission, a 1-2 page research description, and an **UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT** are due in 216 Stimson Hall by 12:00 noon, Friday, September 11, 2009.
2. Outline of Thesis: An outline of the thesis must be submitted to the Honors Seminar Group Leader and Pamela Davis (216 Stimson Hall) on February 9, 2010. The outline must include a brief introduction identifying the subject of your research. It must detail methods, current results, and literature cited. The student must include a list of future experiments. The outline must be signed by the Honors Thesis Advisor.
3. Thesis to Thesis advisor: One copy of the thesis must be submitted to the honors thesis advisor for evaluation by Tuesday, March 23, 2010.
4. Thesis to Seminar Group Leader: Three (3) copies of the thesis are to be submitted to the Honors Seminar Group Leader not later than 12:00 noon, Thursday, April 8, 2010. The copies should be stapled or bound together and include page numbers. Additionally, an electronic copy (pdf) should be submitted to the Honors Seminar Group Leader.
5. Completing the Honors Process Info Session (MANDATORY FOR ALL HONORS CANDIDATES): Students must attend this info session on March 30, 2010, at 4:45pm, location TBA.

Thesis Reviews: It is the responsibility of the Honors Committee member of each Section to have the thesis reviewed by two anonymous faculty members, preferably faculty members of the departments comprising the undergraduate biology major. The reviewers will recommend levels of honors.

The anonymous reviewer's comments must be submitted to the Honors Seminar Group Leader by Friday, April 23, 2010. Comments will be available for the student to pick up from the Seminar Group Leader on or after the same day, depending on their availability.

If the reviewers suggest revisions, the honors student, with consultation from their Thesis Advisor, must consider these suggestions and submit a letter to the Honors Group leader addressing the required revisions. This letter must accompany the final draft of the thesis.

The faculty thesis advisor must submit an evaluation of the thesis and a certification of thesis review to the Honors Seminar Group Leader. The evaluation should include judgements of the significance of the problem, the particular accomplishments of the student in solving the problem, and the thesis. **The Honors Thesis Advisor's evaluation must be in the hands of the Honors Committee member not later than 4:00 PM, Friday, May 7, 2010.**

The unbound thesis should be submitted to the group leader along with revision comments. Students in CALS should submit two copies of their thesis (one for the College, one for the Undergraduate Biology major). Students in the Arts College only need to submit one final copy.

Revised theses are due to the Honors Seminar Group Leader by 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 7, 2010. Please do not staple or use any type of binder for the final version of the thesis.

All recommendations will then be reviewed by the Honors Seminar Group Leader for each program of study and by the Honors Committee. Final authority for awarding of all levels of honors rests

Part #2 of Application

with the Honors Committee. Students will be notified of their level of honors the week of May 17th.

Honors Presentations

All Honors candidates will give a public presentation on their Honors research during the spring semester. The presentation will be either at a scientific poster session, or a 10-minute talk in a department seminar. Dates of presentations will be announced in late March 2010.

Level of Honors:

Recommendation to the faculty that a candidate graduate with honors is the responsibility of the Honors Program Committee. The quality of the thesis, as judged by the reviewers and the Honors group leader, along with the student's final grade point average will determine the level of honors awarded. Students in the College of Arts and Sciences will be awarded Latin honors for their work. Students in CALS will receive distinction, with no level recorded on their diploma.

BioG408- Presentation Skills for Honors Students (Spring Semester):

This 1-credit course covers writing, speaking and presentation skills important for students finishing their undergraduate research. The course consists of several lecture/discussion sections and several practice sessions for oral presentations. Information on the class is available from Laurel Southard (216 Stimson, 4-4533, les3). Students in the Biochemistry Honors group are required to enroll in BioG408. All other honors students are encouraged to enroll.

**ALL Application materials are due to
Pamela Davis in 216 Stimson Hall
by 12:00 p.m., Friday, September 11, 2009**